The parentage of James Adda Anders

written by Kevin P. Thompson, 2014

Proving the parentage of Jimmie Adda is of great interest to the family because her paternal grandmother's parents were Daniel Gilleland, Sr. and Precilla Boatwright. The Gilleland and Boatwright families belonged to Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred, the first 300 or so Anglo settler families to come to Mexican Texas in the early 1820's.

Jimmie Adda was born into a confluence of events in 1874 that has made proving her parentage quite difficult. The ordering of these events is not certain, but their proximity in time is. Without trying to prejudice the following arguments, a general explanation for this difficulty is in order.

In late 1873 or very early 1874, Jimmie's parents were married, probably in Milam County, Texas, and her mother became pregnant around March (based on Jimmie's birth date). Some time in 1874, her father purportedly died, in all likelihood before Jimmie was even born. In addition, the Milam County courthouse burned in 1874 destroying official county records of the marriage of Jimmie's parents and possibly the death of her father. So, we are left with no known primary evidence of Jimmie's parentage or the marriage of her parents. We must therefore turn to secondary evidence.

The following partial descendant chart of James Andrews, Sr. illustrates the relationships that will be described and people that play a role in providing circumstantial and secondary evidence for Jimmie's parentage.

James Andrews, Sr. (m. Martha Formby)
- John Demostinie Anders (m. Nancy Gilleland, d/o Daniel Gilleland and Precilla Boatwright)
  - James W. Anders (m. Mittie or Annie Boatwright)
    - James "Jimmie" Adda Anders (m. Robert Lee Anders; half-sister to Rowland Edwin Slater)
      - Roy Jacob Anders, Sr.
        - Adda Wanda Anders
          - Margaret Ann Baldwin
            - Kevin Paul Thompson
        - Roy Jacob Anders, Jr.
  - Susan Catherine Anders (m. William Henry Anders)
    - James Short Anders
      - Norma Carolyn Anders
  - …
  - Jacob Bolivar Anders
    - Martha "Mattie" Vera Anders (m. Luther Keithly)
    - Clara Frances Anders (m. Burrel Prather Holmes)
      - Margaret Elouise Holmes (m. Charles Johnson)
  - …
- James A. Anders, Jr. (m. Sarah A. Rankin)
  - William Henry Anders (m. Susan Catherine Anders)
    - Robert Lee Anders (m. James "Jimmie" Adda Anders)

The Mother of James Adda Anders

We will begin with the seemingly less crucial task of proving Jimmie Adda's mother. The marriages and situations appear to be terribly complex, so I will do my best to explain. The initial approach below will be a detailed timeline.

> Abt 1846 - James W. Anders is born in Montgomery County, Texas to John Demostinie Anders and Nancy Gilleland[31]. Parentage is implied by the 1850 United States census with support from later censuses and sibling relationships, especially through Jacob Bolivar Anders and other siblings in the 1880 census[27] and the 1870 census[28]. This is further explained in the section "The Father of James Adda Anders" below.

circa 1855 - Mittie Boatwright is born in Texas[20]. The date is a simple approximation based on her marrying young and having a child before the age of 20. There is no direct evidence for her date of birth. Her parentage is completely unknown.

1873/4 - James W. Anders married Mittie Boatwright, probably in Milam County, Texas. There is no direct evidence of this marriage. They are the hypothesized parents of James "Jimmie" Adda Anders.

circa 1874 - James W. Anders dies. There is no direct evidence of his death or burial. Multiple family accounts give this information (see the section "The Father of James Adda Anders" below).

1874 - The Milam County, Texas courthouse burns, likely destroying evidence of the Anders-Boatwright marriage and possibly probate information for James W. Anders.

13 Dec 1874 - James "Jimmie" Adda Anders is born. Her name is evidence of her parentage to James W. Anders since it is exceedingly rare to name a girl "James." In all likelihood her father has already died and she is given this name in his memory.

07 Oct 1877 - Mittie Boatwright marries her second husband Thomas Slater in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama[42]. There is no indication why this marriage took place in Alabama or why it is indexed in Texas marriage records.

11 Aug 1878 - Roland Edwin Slater is born to Thomas Slater and Mittie Boatwright[20].

1878/9 - Mittie Boatwright dies. There is no direct evidence of her death or burial. Her death is assumed based on the remarriage of her second husband Thomas Slater.

23 Sep 1879 - Thomas Slater, second husband of Mittie Boatwright, remarries to Annie Moore in Milam County, Texas[44]. This is Annie Moore's second marriage (first was to John P. Shaw in McClellan County, Texas).

15 Jun 1880 - Thomas Slater, Annie Moore, Roland Slater, and Jimmie Adda Anders appear in the 1880 United States census in Lee County, Texas[22]. They are living in the household of S. T. Slater, the father of Thomas Slater.

[The remaining items that follow in the timeline are not strictly necessary to explain the parentage of Jimmie Adda and the 1880 census. They are provided for completeness to document the lives of the Slaters and Annie Moore.]

06 Feb 1882 - Lottie Xantippe Slater is born in Rockdale, Milam, Texas to Thomas Slater and Annie Moore[45]. Her death certificate gives her parentage. This information is included here mainly to reaffirm Annie's maiden name and her marriage to Thomas Slater.

circa 1882 - Thomas Slater dies, reportedly of consumption (tuberculosis). There is no direct evidence of his death or burial. His death is assumed based on the remarriage of his second wife Annie Moore. This information is primarily included here to support the tracing of Annie's remaining life.

12 Mar 1883 - Annie Moore, second wife of Thomas Slater, remarries to Thomas' brother Lee Slater in Lee County, Texas[46].

22 Jun 1889 - Steve Thomas Slater is born in Madisonville, Madison, Texas to Lee Slater and Annie Moore[47]. This information is included here mainly to reaffirm Annie's maiden name and her marriage to Lee Slater.

[It should be noted that Annie Moore remarries yet again to her fourth husband George Robertson Jay on 12 Nov 1895 in Milam County, Texas. She dies under this surname on 31 Oct 1945 in Cayuga, Anderson, Texas and is buried in Athens City Cemetery, Athens, Henderson, Texas[48]. Much of the information provided here for Annie helps to trace her full life; except for the marriage to Thomas Slater, little of her life and the evidence provided above directly relates to Jimmie Adda Anders.]

With this timeline in mind, let's try to walk through the evidence for the mother of James "Jimmie" Adda Anders.

In 1950, a man named Rowland Edwin Slater died in Bay City, Texas[20]. In his obituary from an unknown Texas newspaper[21], "Jimmie Andres [sic] of Huntsville" is cited as his sister. Given that Rowland and Jimmie have different last names, this can only mean that they are actually half-siblings sharing a common mother. Rowland's death certificate indicates his father is Thomas Slater and his mother is Mittie Boatwright[20]. Therefore, the mother of James "Jimmie" Adda Anders is Mittie Boatwright. The remainder of this discussion attempts to clarify the 1880 census record.

In the 1880 census in Lee County[22], we see a Thomas Slater with an implied wife named Annie and an implied son named Eddie (they are living in Thomas' father's house, S. T. Slater). The 1 year old "Eddie" is a perfect match for Rowland Edwin Slater who was born on 11 Aug 1878 (he is seen going by "Ed" in some later census records, so "Eddie" is an acceptable name to find him under). On the line below Rowland in the census record is a 6-year old *female* named Jas. A. Andrews. And so we have found Jimmie. She seems to be living with her step-father and half-brother in her step-father's father's house. As shown in the timeline, Mittie is not present because she has presumably died and Thomas has remarried to Annie Moore Shaw. Note that this census record implies Jimmie Adda's father is dead or divorced. Evidence given in the section below on Jimmie Adda's father indicates he died in 1874.

The marriage license for Thomas Slater and Mittie (Boatwright) Anders is puzzling. No explanation has been found for the marriage location (Tuscaloosa, Alabama) or its presence in Texas marriage indexes. But, this record does reveal her name from her first marriage as Anders. This does little to prove exactly who Jimmie's father is, but it does appear to settle any remaining questions about Jimmie's mother and where Jimmie is living in 1880.

Some family accounts have Thomas and Mittie removing from the state possibly to California leaving Jimmie behind in Texas where she was purportedly raised by her Aunt Mary Elizabeth Anders Carlile. No evidence of Mittie living past 1880 or of a move to California has been found to date. Mattie Keithly's statements to Margaret Holmes Johnson do however indicate Jimmie was raised by her Carlile relatives.

The Father of James Adda Anders

Proving Jimmie Adda's father is by far the more challenging task. No primary evidence has been found for his marriage or death. We will begin with testimony from family members closely related to him.

On 29 Jan 1980, a woman named Margaret Johnson wrote a letter to my granduncle Roy Jacob Anders, Jr. (son of Roy Jacob Anders, Sr. , grandson of Jimmie Adda)[23]. Margaret Johnson states her parents to be Burrel Holmes and Clara Frances Anders. She also states that Roy's grandmother, Jimmie Anders, is a first cousin to her mother. In other documents included with the letter, Margaret states that in Sep 1966 she received much information from her elderly and sick Aunt Mattie Keithly just before Mattie's death in November[37] (Mattie Keithly died 05 Nov 1966[24] and was born 01 Sep 1888[25]). Included in this information was the fact that Jimmie Adda married a cousin named Lee, that Jimmie's father was James (son of John Demostinie Anders), and that James died in 1874 and was buried in Hamilton Chapel Cemetery, Milam County, Texas[38]. Since Mattie is Margaret's aunt, Mattie is a sister to Clara and therefore also a first cousin to Jimmie Adda. So, this is first hand knowledge being communicated by Margaret Johnson from Mattie Keithly about her first cousin Jimmie Adda.

Looking at the 1900 United States census[26], we find a Jacob B. Anders (age 48 [sic], born Aug 1859 in Texas) living in Edna, Texas with children Mattie (born Sep 1888 in Texas) and Clara (born Feb 1899 in Texas). These children are Margaret's mother and aunt. Since they are first cousins to Jimmie Adda with the same surname, Jimmie Adda's father must be a brother of Jacob B. Anders.

In the 1880 United States census[27], we see Jacob B. Anders (age 20, born in Texas) living with his father John Anders (age 57, born in Alabama). So, John Anders is the man whom we need to find a son of that could logically be the father of Jimmie Adda.

The 1880 census also shows John Anders with two other sons (Henry M. and Virgil) neither of which would have been old enough in 1874 to have been married and had a child. Working the census records backwards in time, in the 1870 United States census[28], we see John Andrews with the three sons listed above and two other implied sons, James W. and Charles, each of which were old enough to be married and have a child in 1874. However, Charles can be ruled out as he died on 28 Nov 1872 and was buried in Hamilton Chapel Cemetery in Milam County, Texas[29]. In the 1860 United States census[30], one additional son is implied for John Anders: Cullin (John Cullen). John Cullen purportedly died on 29 Sep 1865, but I have yet to locate primary documentation of this fact. The 1850 United States census implies no other sons save James W. mentioned above[31].

So, we are left with only one son of John Anders that could be the father of an Anders/Andrews child born in 1874: James W. Anders. James was born about 1846[31] in Montgomery County, Texas (where his parents were living before moving to Milam County[32, 33]) making him 28 years old in 1874. This verifies the fact given by Mattie Anders Keithly[23] that of the sons of John Anders, only James W. Anders could be the father of James Adda Anders.

To further build the case that John Demostinie Anders is the grandfather of Jimmie Adda, on 04 May 1880, a man named John Anders/Andrews) applied in Milam County for guardianship of a 6 year old girl named Jimmie Anders/Andrews, and he was granted such on 27 May[34, 35]. This is surely our Jimmie, but unfortunately no relationship between Jimmie and John is specified in the court papers. In light of the family evidence given above, the grandfather John is gaining guardianship of granddaughter Jimmie.

Another indication of parentage is given simply by Jimmie's name. Jimmie's actual given name is indeed James. This is strongly indicated by the 1880 Lee County census record[22] and also by a court affidavit for the birth of her son Roy Jacob Anders, Sr. in which her name is given as James Adda Anders[36]. Now, James is a very uncommon name for a woman. Given the apparent circumstances around her birth, it seems that her name was given to her in memory of her recently deceased father. This is a nice piece of internal evidence.

In Jul 2007 I received correspondence from a woman named Carolyn Fenton[39] whose maiden name is Norma Carolyn Anders. She is the daughter of James Short Anders and granddaughter of William Henry Anders and Susan Catherine Anders. Susan is a sister of James W. and Jacob Bolivar Anders; William is a brother of Robert Lee Anders (so Susan and William are first cousins). From her letter it is obvious that Carolyn's family was close to my family and that she has firsthand knowledge of Jimmie Adda and her ancestry. She explicitly confirms that Jimmie Adda's father was James W. Anders and James W. and Susan were siblings. This evidence from Carolyn provides verification of the purported facts from another part of the Anders family.

Finally, my granduncle Roy Jacob Anders, Jr. , grandson of Jimmie Adda, has confirmed that Jimmie's father's name was James[40, 41].

I feel certain we have determined that James W. Anders is the father of James Adda Anders. While there is no direct proof, the level of secondary and circumstantial evidence seems sufficient to comfortably draw this conclusion. In addition to the circumstantial evidence, no less than three disparate parts of the Anders family have provided testimony that draws this single conclusion.

Note: The evidence supporting the parentage of James Adda Anders to her father James W. Anders has been reviewed and approved by both the Sons of the Republic of Texas and The Descendants of Austin's Old 300.

References

[20] Death Records of Matagorda County, Texas. Death certificate for Rowland Edwin Slater. (THM-DOC-0015)

[21] Unknown Newspaper. Obituary for Rowland E. Slater, 1950. (THM-DOC-0013)

[22] 1880 United States Census. Lee County, Texas, Page 71 A. (THM-DOC-0032)

[23] Personal correspondence. Letter from Margaret Elouise Holmes to Roy Jacob Anders, Jr., 29 Jan 1980. (THM-DOC-0134)

[24] Social Security Death Index. Entry for Martha Vera Anders (Mattie Keithly). (THM-DOC-0081)

[25] Death Records of Travis County, Texas. Death certificate for Martha Vera Anders. (THM-DOC-0299)
[26] 1900 United States Census. Jackson County, Texas, Page 128 A. (THM-DOC-0033)
[27] 1880 United States Census. Milam County, Texas, Page 258 A. (THM-DOC-0032)
[28] 1870 United States Census. Milam County, Texas, Page 308 A. (THM-DOC-0031)
[29] Holman, Norinne Holder, 170 Years of Cemetery Records in Milam County, Texas, Volume 1 A-M, Armstrong Printing, Inc., Austin, TX, 2001. Page 346, Hamilton Chapel Cemetery. (THM-DOC-0070)
[30] 1860 United States Census. Milam County, Texas, Page 62 B. (THM-DOC-0030)
[31] 1850 United States Census. Milam County, Texas, Page 18 A. (THM-DOC-0029)
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[33] Mullins, Marion Day, Republic of Texas: Poll Lists for 1846, Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1982. Page 3. (THM-DOC-0151)
[34] Probate Court Records of Milam County, Texas. Case 171 B. (THM-DOC-0144)
[35] Minutes of the Probate Court of Milam County, Texas. Volume A, Page 556-557. (THM-DOC-0183)
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[37] Final research report of Margaret Holmes Johnson, 20 Nov 1990, page 20. (THM-DOC-0300)
[38] Family group sheet for John Demostinie Anders prepared by Margaret Holmes Johnson. (THM-DOC-0300)
[39] Personal correspondence. Letter from Norma Carolyn Anders to Kevin Paul Thompson, 10 Jul 2007. (THM-DOC-0134)
[40] Personal correspondence. E-mail from Roy Jacob Anders, Jr. to Kevin Paul Thompson, 28 Dec 2005. (THM-DOC-0134)
[41] Personal correspondence. E-mail from Roy Jacob Anders, Jr. to Kevin Paul Thompson, 29 Dec 2005. (THM-DOC-0134)
[42] Texas, Marriages, 1837-1973. Marriage record for Thomas Slater and Mintie Anders (Mittie Boatwright). (THM-DOC-0443)
[44] Marriage Records of Milam County, Texas. Marriage license for Thomas Slater and A. M. Shaw, Book 16, Page 263. (THM-DOC-0168)
[45] Death Records of Henderson County, Texas. Death certificate for Lottie Zan Tippie Holliman. (THM-DOC-0384)
[46] Marriage Records of Lee County, Texas. Marriage license for Lee Slater and Annie Slater, Book ?, Page 289. (THM-DOC-0388)
[47] Death Records of Hunt County, Texas. Death certificate for Steve Thomas Slater. (THM-DOC-0385)
[48] Death Records of Anderson County, Texas. Death certificate for Annie Jay. (THM-DOC-0383)